

Risks of implant treatment

As well as all the benefits of implant treatment there are some potential risks that you need to be aware of. I have outlined these below.

General risks

As with any surgical procedure there is a risk of infection and post-operative bleeding. In the upper jaw sinus involvement and nose bleeding may occur. The risk of infection is minimised by the use of antibiotics when indicated as well as detailed post-operative care instructions.

Occasionally a scar will be palpable or visible in the gums where an incision has been made. This is minimised by careful flap design and suturing.

Recovery period

You can expect some swelling, tenderness and possible bruising from the surgical site for a few days. Most people find implant placement and the recovery period uneventful. You will be given medication to minimise the discomfort as well as detailed written instructions with my contact number for advice and in case of an emergency.

Smoking

If you smoke, it is essential to note that research has shown that smoking more than doubles the rate of implant failure, in the short and long term. This is due to a reduced healing capacity of the soft tissues as well as the bone. Therefore, smoking should be stopped altogether, otherwise you risk losing your investment. This is a very important issue that you must take into consideration when you decide on the best treatment option for you.

Gum disease

Research has also shown that individuals with a history of gum disease have an increased risk of implant failure and complications such as gum infections around implants.

Failure

Occasionally an implant fails. The failure rate is 1 – 5% depending on specific

circumstances and the implant can usually be replaced. Sometimes additional procedures are required for this.

Implants that have been in function for one year without any problems are very unlikely to fail as long as your health in general and the gums around the implants are maintained and no excessive forces are exerted.

With the above in mind if an implant fails within the first two years of function we will replace it free of charge. If the implant cannot be replaced for any reason you will be refunded 50% of the cost.

Nerve damage

The main risks involved with implant placement and bone grafting in the lower jaw include the potential for damage to the inferior dental nerve, which gives sensation to the lip, chin and the lower teeth. This risk is minimal, as every precaution is taken to avoid the nerve. However, in the unlikely event of nerve damage, you might notice an alteration of the sensation from the lip and/or chin area on the affected side, but no physical difference would be noticeable to others.

Recession

There is a risk of gum recession around implants and although this may not affect their survival it may require treatment for aesthetic reasons. When recession occurs in between an implant and a tooth or, between two implants a gap can become apparent. The significance of this is really in implant cases at the front of the mouth in the upper jaw in someone who has a high smile line.

Wear & tear

Natural teeth as well as implants are subject to wear and tear as time goes on and depending on the amount of wear the need to replace the prosthesis on top of the implant(s) may arise. If and when this becomes necessary a fee will be chargeable.